Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District
Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
Friday, July 10, 2026
8:00 a.m.

A meeting of the Governing Board of the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District ("District") was held at the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Executive Building at 44801 Village Ct., Suite 104, Palm Desert, CA 92260 on Friday, July 10, 2026, at 8:00 a.m.

Public Notices were posted by the Clerk of the Board on Monday, July 6, 2026, at the following locations:

1. CVPCD Administrative Office – 82895 Avenue 52, Coachella, CA 92236
2. CVPCD Executive Office – 44801 Village Ct., Suite 104, Palm Desert, CA 92260
3. The CVPCD website – http://coachellacemetery.org

Chair Rosales called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m., those in attendance were as follows:

Trustees present:
Ernesto Rosales, Chair
Judy Vossler, Vice Chair
Bruce Underwood, Trustee

Trustees absent:
Marcos Coronel, Trustee *(Excused, Board Action - Underwood/Vossler, 3-0)*

One Board seat was vacant due to the passing of Trustee John Rios.

Additional participants:
Josh Bonner, General Manager
Sherry Winder, Finance Manager/Clerk of the Board
Carlos Campos, General Counsel
Marlene Navarro-Lupian, Cemetery Services Manager
Alaynè Marie Sampson, Chandler Asset Management *(via Zoom)*
David Turner, Coachella Valley Engineers

Additional participants for Public Comment:
None

FLAG SALUTE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PUBLIC COMMENT
None

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA
No additions were made to the agenda. Item 2.3 was pulled as it was administratively unnecessary.

1. PRESENTATIONS

1.1 Presentation by Alaynè Marie Sampson, Chandler Asset Management
District's Investment Portfolio Update

Alaynè Marie Sampson provided an economic update and reported that the District's investments are performing well, with total investments increasing by approximately $750,000 over the past year, or $1.2 million including additional District contributions.

1.2 Presentation by David Turner, CV Engineers
Development and capital projects update

David Turner provided an update on the pavement rehabilitation and expansion projects, noting that some areas previously planned for overlay will now require rehabilitation and costs may be 10% to 20% higher than previously estimated. GM Bonner noted that a 20% increase would be approximately $260,000 and that the bid package will need to include language making the project contingent upon receipt of federal funding. Mr. Turner stated that the bid package is expected to be ready by the end of the month, with bids anticipated in early September, and noted that he is working with multiple County departments on expansion project requirements.

GM Bonner noted that the current remaining grave inventory is anticipated to last approximately one year; however, developing one additional section could extend available inventory into early 2028 without constructing new roads.

The Board thanked Mr. Turner for his presentation.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

2.1 Trustee Minutes
June 12, 2026

2.2 Adoption of Resolution 139
Establishment of CalPERS Pension Fund

Staff Recommendations: *Staff recommends that the Board of Trustees:*
1. Approve Resolution No. 139, authorizing the District to enter into an Agreement and Election to Prefund Employer Contributions to a Defined Benefit Pension Plan.

2. Provide direction on which CEPPT Strategy (1 or 2) should be selected for the District's initial investment.

Financial Analysis: *The Board-approved allocation of $500,000 from the General Fund account will be transferred to the CEPPT Fund upon completion of enrollment. There is no cost to join the CEPPT program. Ongoing participation is subject to an all-inclusive annual administrative fee of 25 basis points (0.25%), based on the District's asset balance in the trust.*

~~**2.3 Approval of Staff Overtime**~~
~~Authorization for exempt overtime for Father's Day~~

Discussion: Vice Chair Vossler commended Clerk Winder on the minutes. GM Bonner noted that the CalPERS Pension Fund item was still under legal review and may require minor revisions, but was included for consideration so that, if approved by legal counsel, it could be enacted without returning to the Board.

Motion: Vossler – Move approval
Second: Underwood
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Vacant: One Board seat
Motion passed.

3. ACTION ITEMS

3.1 California Special District Association Board of Directors Election
CSDA Southern Network, Seat C District vote

Staff Recommendations: *Provide direction to the General Manager regarding the District's vote in the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) Board of Directors election for Southern Network – Seat C for the 2027–2029 term.*

Financial Analysis: *There is no known financial impact resulting from this action.*

Discussion: GM Bonner noted that the item is within the Board's purview. Trustee Underwood stated that he contacted all candidates and spoke with those who responded to his outreach. Based on those conversations, he recommended that the Board support Jason Dafforn.

Motion: Underwood – Move to support Jason Dafforn
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood
Abstain: None
No: None

Absent: Coronel
Vacant: One Board seat
Motion passed.

3.2 California Association of Public Cemeteries Board of Directors Election
Candidate authorization to stand for election

Staff Recommendations: *The Board may a take a vote to establish their support for Trustee Rosales continuing to serve on the CAPC Board of Directors.*

Financial Analysis: *There is no direct fiscal impact associated with supporting Trustee Rosales' candidacy. If elected, attendance at CAPC Board meetings will require travel and related expenses, subject to future Board authorization and applicable District policies. CAPC does not reimburse mileage or meeting expenses except for its annual Board planning meeting.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed that CAPC will hold its Board election later this year and is requesting support for the nomination of Chair Rosales to serve another term, if willing. Chair Rosales stated that he is willing to serve one additional term to assist with the transition and would appreciate the Board's support. The Board expressed appreciation for Chair Rosales' willingness to serve.

Motion: Underwood – Support Chair Rosales' nomination
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Vacant: One Board seat
Motion passed.

3.3 Disinterment Procedure and Policy
Funeral Home Attendance Requirement

Staff Recommendations: *Staff recommends that the Board of Trustees approve the proposed Disinterment Procedures and Funeral Home Attendance Requirement, authorize staff to incorporate the language into the District's Interment Services Regulations, and establish a disinterment rescheduling fee of $250.00 to apply when a scheduled disinterment cannot proceed or must be rescheduled due to the absence of required funeral home personnel.*

Financial Analysis: *Staff recommends establishing a disinterment rescheduling fee of $250.00. The proposed fee is intended to recover the District's administrative and operational costs when a scheduled disinterment cannot proceed due to the absence of required funeral home personnel. These costs may include staff scheduling, equipment preparation, administrative coordination, and disruption to other cemetery operations. If the disinterment has already begun and must be stopped due to the absence or departure of required funeral home personnel, additional fees or costs may apply depending on the work performed and the actions required to safely secure the grave,* *remains, and work area. Depending on the circumstances, these costs may include additional disinterment or reinterment charges, up to the full cost of performing the disinterment again.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed that a possible deposit requirement for funeral homes related to disinterments had previously been discussed; however, staff determined this was not the best method because the contract is between the family and the District.

CSM Navarro-Lupian noted that staff currently begins the disinterment process and waits for the funeral home, which can result in additional labor if the funeral home does not arrive. GM Bonner stated that, under the proposed policy, the District would not begin the disinterment process until the funeral home is present, when required. He clarified that funeral home presence is generally only needed for original interments in a liner, not when the decedent was interred in a vault.

Staff recommended creating a $250 rescheduling fee for disinterments that must be rescheduled due to the funeral home not arriving.

Motion: Underwood – Move approval
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Vacant: One Board seat
Motion passed.

3.4 Día de los Muertos Stage and Production Services
Review of RFP results and direction to proceed

Staff Recommendations: *Staff recommends that the Board of Trustees authorize the General Manager to finalize and execute an agreement with Rhythm Tech Productions, LLC for Día de los Muertos stage and production services, in an amount not to exceed $25,009.96 for the 2026 event, subject to final contract review and approval as to form.*

Financial Analysis: *The proposed cost for Rhythm Tech Productions is $25,009.96 for the 2026 Día de los Muertos event. This amount includes stage, audio, lighting, LED video display, generator, cabling, rigging, technical labor, and related production services. Funding for Día de los Muertos event expenses is included in the District's adopted operating budget. Entertainment costs will need to be procured separately from the proposed production agreement.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed that the RFP for the Dia de los Muertos stage vendor was sent out and received four bids, three of which were qualified. He noted that the former vendor is no longer operating independently and was unable to provide a quote in time. GM Bonner also noted that entertainment was not included in the RFP, as not all vendors provide both stage and entertainment services.

Board discussion ensued regarding the bids, former vendor, and available options. Chair Rosales confirmed that the former vendor is unable to assist with the event this year but provided his entertainment contact for reference.

Motion: Underwood – Move staff proposal
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Vacant: One Board seat
Motion passed.

3.5 Employee Handbook Updates and Revisions

Annual review of policy

Staff Recommendations: *Staff are recommending the Board approve the revised Employee Handbook as presented in Exhibit A.*

Financial Analysis: *There is no known financial impact resulting from this action.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed that the Employee Handbook is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with changes in California law. He noted that recently adopted employee policies were incorporated into the Handbook, references related to the Board or Trustees were removed, and corresponding updates regarding employees will be made to the Governance Policy. He also noted that no changes were made to employee benefits. The Board noted the concise staff report was helpful, and GM Bonner thanked legal counsel for preparing it.

Motion: Underwood – So moved
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Vacant: One Board seat
Motion passed.

3.6 Amendment to General Rules and Regulations

Requests for limited operational exceptions by vendors

Staff Recommendations: *Staff recommends that the Board approve the proposed amendment to the General Rules and Regulations authorizing the General Manager to approve limited operational exceptions for authorized vendors conducting business on District property. The proposed policy adjustment incorporated into the entire "Outside Vendors" section of the General Rules and Regulations policy may be viewed as Exhibit A, attached.*

Financial Analysis: *There is no direct financial impact associated with the proposed policy amendment.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed that the item was brought forward following public comment from a vendor at the previous meeting requesting use of a small canopy while performing work on District property. He noted that, at the Board's request, the General Rules and Regulations are being amended to allow the General Manager to approve exceptions to the policy. Board discussion included liability concerns, and GM Bonner noted that vendor insurance is required for this reason.

Motion: Underwood – Move approval
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Vacant: One Board seat
Motion passed.

4. INFORMATION ITEMS

4.1 Cell Tower Lease Inquiry

Potential for District land use for proposed cell tower

GM Bonner reviewed that the District was approached by an outside vendor regarding placement of a cell tower on District property. The proposal included use of approximately 3,600 square feet for five years, with extensions, at $12,000 per year. GM Bonner noted that three locations were proposed, with Location 2 being the preferred option, as the other locations may impact future development. He also noted potential benefits, including long-term revenue and improved cell coverage, but stated that due to the location, the vendor would require access to the maintenance yard.

Board discussion ensued regarding the proposed location, amount of compensation, potential neighborhood benefit, and future revenue considerations. It was noted that Trustee Coronel was absent but had previously requested that his opposition be noted. The Board expressed that the proposed compensation was too low and preferred a higher monthly amount, as well as a location in the back southern corner of the Cemetery. GM Bonner stated that he would communicate the Board's concerns to the vendor and determine whether an alternative location and higher compensation could be considered.

4.2 Veterans Memorial Enhancements

Addition of DG and floral bushes

GM Bonner reviewed that, given the importance of the Veterans Memorial area, the item was added to the agenda for Board consideration. He proposed adding decomposed granite and flowering bushes on both sides of the Veterans Memorial to mirror the improvements on the center island, at an estimated cost of approximately $2,000. The Board had no objection.

4.3 Endowment Care Payment Compliance Update
Endowment Care contributions for multiple-lot purchases

GM Bonner reviewed that FM Winder identified an issue with how the District was calculating endowment payments. FM Winder reviewed the Health and Safety Code requirements, noting that endowment payments must be the greater of $250 or 10% per lot sale, and the greater of $150 or 5% per niche sale. Board discussion ensued, and the Board accepted the explanation provided.

4.4 Capital Project Management Support Services
Consulting support for new project development

GM Bonner reviewed that he would like to bring in consulting support for the Cemetery's new development project, noting that staff is not equipped to manage the capital improvement project internally. He requested Board approval to bring back an RFP for consideration to determine the cost of project management support. The Board stated a preference for a company with local or nearby support available in person if needed. The Board supported moving forward with the RFP process.

5. COMMITTEE UPDATES

5.1 LAFCO MSR Ad Hoc Committee

Trustee Underwood reported that LAFCO discussions are moving forward and noted that a meeting was held with Trustee Underwood and legal counsel, and that Trustee Coronel was unable to attend. He stated that annexation would not guarantee immediate property tax funds, but may provide long-term property tax potential. He recommended continuing with mapping and the LAFCO process, noting that the process could take several months and that property tax funds may not be received for several years. GM Bonner noted that the item could return as an action item at the next meeting.

Counsel Campos reviewed follow-up items, including CEQA, mapping, legal descriptions, and the annexation application. He also noted that tax-sharing negotiations would need to begin with the County and Board of Supervisors, and that the Ad Hoc Committee may need to remain in place for negotiation purposes.

6. TRUSTEE/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

6.1 Trustee Comments and Event/Function Report Out

Trustee Underwood reported that he attended the CSDA General Manager Conference and attended GM Bonner's session regarding reporting to the Board for the decision-making process. He stated that GM Bonner's use of the "DISTRICT" acronym was beneficial and that the information would be helpful to share with the Board. Trustee Underwood also reported meeting with Enterprise, who noted direct billing is now available, and attending a networking dinner during the conference. He also reported attending the LAFCO Ad Hoc Committee meeting with legal counsel.

Vice Chair Vossler reported that she did not attend any events this month but continues to visit the office to sign checks. She expressed concern regarding the amount of paperwork prepared for Board packets and requested consideration of reviewing some documents electronically, with only select items printed, such as the agenda, minutes, financials, and General Manager's Report. GM Bonner noted that iPads could be provided with the packet loaded for review during meetings, but some Trustees prefer printed copies of certain documents. Chair Rosales supported bringing the item back to the next agenda, and GM Bonner stated that it would be added as an informational item. Vice Chair Vossler also commended the General Manager's Report.

Chair Rosales reported that he attended a recent CAPC meeting regarding the transition of leadership. Trustee Underwood asked whether changes were expected with the transition, and Chair Rosales noted that some changes are anticipated, particularly related to education.

6.2 General Manager Update

GM Bonner stated that both Managers provide their departmental reports to him monthly, and those updates are incorporated into the General Manager's Report. He also advised that two policy-required memorandums were included in the Board folders: Father's Day Overtime and Emergency Vacation Cash Out. Both items had been approved and issued. GM Bonner further reported that there is an EDD case filed by the District's former payroll company, with no financial encumbrance to the District, and that staff will request cancellation of the hearing.

GM Bonner asked whether the Board had received any concerns regarding the recent price changes. Chair Rosales stated that the prices are fair and reasonable overall but expressed concern that the setting fees may be excessive. GM Bonner stated that the setting fees could be brought back to a future meeting and reminded the Board that it controls the fees and may override the Fee Study if desired.

GM Bonner reported that work has begun on the District's 100th anniversary and asked whether the Board preferred establishing a committee or receiving updates directly. The Board requested that updates be brought directly to the Board and indicated that no committee was needed.

GM Bonner noted that, approximately one year ago, concerns were raised regarding the District's involvement in legislative affairs, and the General Manager was asked to step back from those efforts. He stated that recent legislative activity has directly impacted cemeteries, and CSDA has requested feedback within short timeframes, sometimes within three to five days, which does not align with the Board meeting schedule. As a result, the District has gone from having an active voice to no voice on these matters. GM Bonner requested that the item be brought back to a future agenda to discuss either establishing a legislative committee or returning authority to the General Manager to act under the District's legislative platform. The Board requested that the item be brought back, and Chair Rosales noted the importance of the District having a voice, as others look to the District on cemetery-related matters.

GM Bonner reported that staff would like to install a television in the Administrative Office lobby to play the "What to Expect" video, a welcome message from the Chair, and drone footage on a loop. He also commended staff for doing their best to accommodate customers seeking appointments prior to the price increase, noting that all customers who reached out were able to receive an appointment.

FM Winder reported that the District has begun reaching the 24-month contract deadlines under the new contract terms and that Finance Specialist Barajas has taken a proactive approach to notifying customers before their contracts reach default. She noted that customers are contacted by email and phone, with certified letters sent if no response is received.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME, DATE AND LOCATION
Friday, August 14, 2026
8:00 a.m.
Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Executive Office
44801 Village Ct., Suite 104
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Respectfully Submitted,
Sherry Winder
Clerk of the Board

Approved: __________ BOT Mtg.